

THE MEDICAL LIBRARY CENTER OF NEW YORK

Dr. Howard Reid Craig, President of The Medical Library Center of New York and Director of The New York Academy of Medicine has announced that an eight-story garage and loft building on East 102nd Street has been purchased to house a new medical library center which will serve medical schools and research institutions in the New York area.

As president of the trustees of the new organization, which has been incorporated as The Medical Library Center of New York, Dr. Craig said that grants from the Avalon Foundation, The Commonwealth Fund, The John and Mary R. Markle Foundation, the James Foundation of New York, and the Health Research Council of the City of New York had provided the initial financing.

The new Medical Library Center of New York will provide for the libraries of its participating organizations the additional storage space and services needed to keep up with the steadily increasing output of medical and scientific literature. Accumulation of literature in medical and allied sciences of the past two decades has overtaxed the facilities of medical schools and research organizations to such an extent that housing and service problems have become acute.

With six medical schools, several outstanding research institutes, a concentration of industrial research, and abundant clinical material, metropolitan New York has today the greatest resources in medical education and research in the world. Much of the material which fills the library stacks of these institutions may be classed as less used material but nevertheless must be easily and quickly available for research purposes. Each of these libraries, to a large extent, duplicates the holdings of the others so that, with the passage of time, all become cluttered with the same less used material. On a community basis this is uneconomical and inefficient.

A conference of over 100 medical librarians at The New York Academy of Medicine in 1958 urged that such a medical library center be set up near the Academy's library, because of its central location and its large resources. Later, meetings with the heads of medical schools and research institutes led to the Center's establishment, with the five medical schools in New York and the Bronx—Columbia, Cornell, Einstein, N.Y.U., and New York Medical College—The Rockefeller Institute, the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, The New York Academy of Medicine, and the Department of Health of the City of New York, as participating members.

An initial staff of three, under the direction of Mr. Erich Meyerhoff, former librarian of the Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, has been working since last spring on plans and policies for the Center from temporary

quarters at The New York Academy of Medicine. Under a grant from The John A. Hartford Foundation, one of the first projects is the preparation of a Union Catalog, or central file of all periodicals in medicine and allied sciences held by libraries in the New York area. This will be printed and distributed to the participants.

The Center will also serve the following purposes:

- Provide housing for the less used materials of its participants, thus releasing library space for more used current journals and books and avoiding duplication.
- Purchase, for joint use, medical literature which is not available through one of the participating libraries but which would be of value to the other libraries.
- Make all of its materials available to its participants upon request through photoduplication, delivery service, and other methods now being worked out.
- Maintain a current card catalog for all of its holdings to be distributed in book form. Conduct research toward solving problems of storing and disseminating medical information, and library practice.

The Center staff expects to move to their new quarters early next summer after conversion of the sixth and seventh floors for library purposes. The remaining six floors will continue to be rented for commercial purposes. The building's address is 5-17 East 102nd Street.

Initially, operating expenses will be shared by the nine participating institutions. A different sharing formula is expected to be worked out as other institutions become a part of the Center. In addition, grants for development and other expenses are expected to come from other foundations.

Trustees in addition to Dr. Craig, Director of The New York Academy of Medicine, are: Dr. John E. Deitrick, Dean of the Cornell University Medical Colleges; Dr. H. Houston Merritt, Dean of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University; Dr. Leona Baumgartner, Commissioner of Health of The City of New York; Dr. Frank L. Horsfall, Jr., President and Director of the Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research; Dr. Marcus Kogel, Dean of the Albert Einstein Medical College, Yeshiva University; Dr. James S. Murphy, Associate Professor of The Rockefeller Institute; Dr. Henry T. Randall, Clinical Director of the Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied Diseases; Dr. Ralph E. Snyder, President and Dean of the New York Medical College; and Dr. S. Bernard Wortis, Dean of the New York University Schools of Medicine.